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# homemakers' chat

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U. S. DEPARTMENT  
OF AGRICULTURE

(RELEASE ON RECEIPT)

SUBJECT: "Canning Check-up" - information from canning specialists of the  
U. S. Department of Agriculture.

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Have you heard the good word on water-bath canners?

Half-a-million new enameled water-bath canners have been authorized for manufacture this year. So if you want one...chances are good you'll be able to get it through regular retail channels.

Of course...many of you will use a bit of ingenuity and contrive a water-bath canner from something you already have on hand. It may be a lard can or a wash boiler...a metal pail or a kettle....

Since you'll be needing a water-bath canner soon to can fruits and tomatoes and other acid foods...now is a good time to see about this necessary piece of equipment.

Canning specialists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture say the three strategic points to check on a water-bath canner are depth...the rack...and the lid.

How deep? Well that depends on whether you're canning in pint or quart jars. The water-bath canner needs to be deep enough to allow room for the rack...the jar ...and space over the jar so the water can boil briskly over the jar tops. In other words...the vessel needs to be three or four inches taller than the jars. Now a pint jar is six inches tall...a quart jar...eight inches. That would add up to a vessel about ten inches deep for pint jars...twelve inches deep for quarts.

If you use a home-made canner...get a rack that fits. Maybe you have a bread cooling rack...or a wire basket that'll do. Maybe you can make the rack from wire or wood. (Just a note of caution...don't use pine because the resin's likely to boil out and get on the jars.)

As for the lid...watch that it isn't too tight. You want a lid that will hold in the steam enough to help heat the jars...but not so tight as to bottle up the steam. For example...a tightly fitted lard can lid would bottle up enough steam to burst the can seam.

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